

Victorian Studies Association of Ontario



September 2009

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The President's Message

After a rainy cool summer across Ontario we now begin the start of a new year, our 43rd, for the Victorian Studies Association of Ontario.

Several talks and panels have been planned for the coming year. The VSAO is co-organizing a panel on "Victorian Systems and Standardization" with the Association of Canadian College and University Teachers of English for the 2010 Congress in Montreal at Concordia University (please see page 4 for further details). In addition, please watch this website for postings on upcoming Evening Lectures. There will be two lectures in the Toronto area and lectures are also planned for Nipissing and Ottawa. I also encourage any VSAO member who would like to plan a lecture to contact the executive so that we may put a notice on the VSAO website.

After the success of the Glendon College location for our annual conference last year, we have elected to hold this year's conference, Victorian Cultural Icons and Iconography, Then and Now, on the Glendon campus again in 2010. Kate Flint and Bernard Lightman will be our plenary speakers. Kate Flint will discuss Victorian costume, photographic styles, poses, and well-known photographs. Bernard Lightman will discuss biographies of Charles Darwin before 1900, when Darwin's image as cultural icon was being formulated and contested. The program promises to be exciting and stimulating; we look forward to seeing you there (please see page 3 for further details).

In addition to promoting Victorian studies in Ontario, organizing talks and conferences, one of our activities has traditionally been "political lobbying in support of architectural preservation, art gallery collections, library holdings, and other community issues relevant to

the interests of Victorianists.” I remind you of this facet of our association in the event that any of you are involved in such activities and would like to bring them to the attention of our membership.

I would like to close by thanking not only the executive for their speedy and thoughtful work over the summer on a range of items, but also all of you who have contributed to the vitality of this organization over the past year. As usual, responses on any aspect of our activities or suggestions for new events are most welcome.

With best wishes,
Barbara

Forthcoming Conferences, Events and CFPs

Tea Grannies & Friends 10th Anniversary Celebration:
“Steeped in Victorian Tradition”

Tea Grannys & Friends is pleased to announce its 10th season in creating Victorian tea memories. Our tea salon is located on a working organic farm north of Newtonville, offering a unique educational tea experience for guests. This autumn tea event “Steeped in Victorian Tradition” will commemorate this very special milestone of ten years in business. To celebrate this auspicious occasion, we have invited Queen Victoria and her ladies-in-waiting.



Lady Kimberly & Lord Ivan invite you to attend this Light Luncheon & Afternoon Tea including a special audience with Her Majesty Queen Victoria, on Sunday, October 18, 2009. Doors open 12:00 noon. Program commences promptly at 1:00 p.m., at the Newcastle Community Hall 20 King Avenue West, Newcastle [Northwest corner of King & Mill Streets] Programme will conclude at 4:30 p.m.

Advance Tickets: \$25.00 per person

Limited Reserved Seating

RSVP as soon as possible, please!

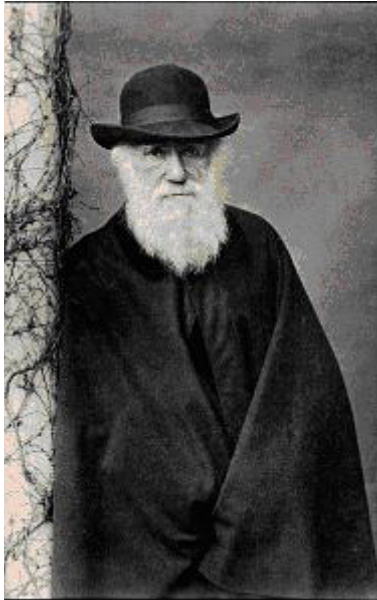
(905) 983-5816

Century inspired attire encouraged. Guests are requested to bring a treasured teacup.

Ticket price of \$25.00 includes a catered light lunch, afternoon tea and Victorian puzzlements, courtesy of the royals. Tickets are available by calling Tea Grannys & Friends (905) 983-5816 or by visiting David Alexander Home & Gift Gallery, The Village Linen Cupboard or Yummy Pleasures in Newcastle. Also at Johnathan’s Country Patch in Newtonville.

For more information, view www.teagrannysandfriends.com.

VSAO Annual Spring Conference CFP



Victorian Studies Association of Ontario
Annual Spring Conference, 24 April 2010
Glendon Campus,

York University Call for Papers: **Victorian Cultural Icons and Iconography, Then and Now**

The VSAO will hold its 43rd annual conference at the beautiful Glendon Campus of York University, Toronto on 24 April 2010. This one-day event includes a morning panel of three speakers, followed by lunch, the VSAO business meeting and two plenary speakers in the afternoon.

Plenary Speakers

Kate Flint

Department of English, Rutgers University
Neo-Victorian Photography and Victorian Masquerade

Bernard Lightman

Division of Humanities, York University
*The Many Lives of Charles Darwin: Biographies
and the Definitive Evolutionist*

Call for papers: We are seeking papers that explore Victorian cultural icons and iconography. How were these icons produced, contested, and disseminated in the period? How do they continue to signify today? What media were used? Which public and private forums? What forms of narration? Where do cultural icons and iconography come together? How did different Victorian iconographies develop? We welcome papers that attend to the production of cultural icons and/or iconography in the Victorian period as well as papers that consider the ways in which these cultural icons or iconographies continue to circulate today. Possible topics include: *public figures or objects as cultural icons; the way they were constructed at the time; and/or the way they continue to exert a cultural force now. Examples may include but are not limited to: scientific figures of the period; inventors; poets; novelists; actors; sexologists; and figures involved in new social movements;

*new iconographies; the way they developed in the Victorian period; and/or the way they continue to signify today. Examples may include but are not limited to: visual art; photography; architecture; geography; narrative; genre; monuments; power; empire; race; class; combat; urban developments, and so on.

Iconography: 1. the set of symbols or images used in a particular field of activity, for example, music or the movies, and recognized by people as having a particular meaning. 2. the symbols and images used conventionally in a genre of painting, or the study and interpretation of these symbols and images. 3. the collection, description, or study of images of somebody or something specific

Cultural Icon: 1. A cultural icon can be an [image](#), a [symbol](#), a [logo](#), [picture](#), [name](#), [face](#), [person](#), or [building](#) or other image that is readily recognized, and generally represents an object or concept with great cultural significance to a wide cultural group.

In keeping with this year's theme, *Victorian Cultural Icons and Iconography, Then and Now*, the VSAO executive invites abstracts for papers to be presented at our morning panel. Please send electronic copies of proposals (300-500 words) and a brief biographical statement to Barbara Leckie (barbara_leckie@carleton.ca) by **22 January 2010**. Alternatively, hard copies can be sent by mail to Barbara Leckie / Department of English / Carleton University / 1125 Colonel By Drive / Ottawa, ON K1S 5B6.

Joint Session Proposal VSAO/ACCUTE:

Victorian Studies Association of Ontario
Fiona Coll (University of Toronto) & Connie Crompton (York University/Ryerson University)

Victorian Systems and Standardization

Our little systems have their day...
Tennyson, *In Memoriam*, Prologue, st. 5

From the factory to the railway, the telegraph to the postal service, the growth of empire to the establishment of national educational curricula, the nineteenth century was marked by large-scale impositions of system, and by a concurrent emphasis on the standardization of objects, concepts, and people. This panel seeks to explore the imbrications of system and standardization throughout the Victorian era, and to examine how the concept of rationalized organization was imagined and understood by Victorians. How did the generalized abstraction inherent in the process of standardization shape the lived experience of individuals? What supra-individual needs were anticipated in the construction of various

kinds of system? To what extent did the Victorians envisage a connection between systematization and knowledge production?

Papers may focus on any occurrence of system or standardization during the Victorian period, such as:

- Genre as artistic standardization
- Disciplines (scientific and otherwise)
- Domestic conventions
- Bodies in systems
- Heterodox and orthodox belief systems
- Formal and informal economies
- The aesthetics of system

We are also interested in events and ideas that were explicitly figured as resistances to system, such as:

- Works of genius or inspiration
- Free love
- Anarchy
- Mutiny

Following the instructions on the ACCUTE website (under Conference) for joint association sessions, send your 700 word proposal (or 8-10 page double-spaced paper), a 100 word abstract, a 50 word biographical statement, and the submitter information form, to VSAOatACCUTE@gmail.com by November 15th.

Note: You must be a current ACCUTE member or a member of VSAO to submit to this session.

Upcoming talks

Grace Kehler will be giving an evening lecture in Toronto this Fall and Cannon Schmitt will be giving an evening lecture in February. Watch the VSAO website for information on upcoming talks in Toronto, Ottawa, and Nipissing.

Recent Publications by VSAO Members

Bolus-Reichert, Christine. [*The Age of Eclecticism: Literature and Culture in Britain, 1815-1885*](#). (Columbus: Ohio State UP, 2009).

The burden of the past invoked by any discussion of eclecticism is a familiar aspect of modernity, particularly in the history of literature. *The Age of Eclecticism: Literature and Culture in Britain, 1815-1885* by Christine Bolus-Reichert aims to reframe that dynamic and

to place it in a much broader context by examining the rise of a manifold eclecticism in the nineteenth century. Bolus-Reichert focuses on two broad understandings of eclecticism in the period – one understood as an unreflective embrace of either conflicting beliefs or divergent historical styles, the other a mode of critical engagement that ultimately could lead to a rethinking of the contrast between creation and criticism and of the very idea of the original. She also contributes to the emerging field of transnational Victorian studies and, in doing so, finds a way to talk about a broader, post-Romantic nineteenth-century culture. By reviving eclecticism as a critical term, Bolus-Reichert historicizes the theoretical language available to us for describing how Victorian culture functioned in order to make the terrain of Victorian scholarship international and comparative and create a place for the Victorians in the genealogy of postmodernism. *The Age of Eclecticism* gives Victorianists and other students of nineteenth-century literature and culture a new perspective on familiar debates that intersect in crucial ways with issues still relevant to literature in an age of multiculturalism and postmodernism.

Butlin, Susan. [*The Practice of Her Profession: Florence Carlyle, Canadian Painter in the Age of Impressionism*](#) (Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 2009).

Florence Carlyle (1864-1923), born in Galt, Ontario, emerged as one of the most successful Canadian artists of her time. Trained in Paris, she lived and worked in New York City and in Canada, cultivating a career as a popular portrait and genre painter. In *The Practice of Her Profession*, Susan Butlin draws on unpublished letters and family memoirs to recount Carlyle's personal and professional life. She explores Carlyle's artistic influences, her relationships with artist colleagues and encounters with the cultural worlds of Paris, New York, and early twentieth-century Canada, and provides a detailed examination of Carlyle's paintings. *The Practice of Her Profession* is important reading for all those interested in Canadian art and cultural history, and the history of women artists in Canada.

Henry, Nancy and Cannon Schmitt, eds. [*Victorian Investments: New Perspectives on Finance and Culture*](#). (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana UP, 2008).

A collection of innovative, interdisciplinary essays investigating the complex cultures that developed around and within the nineteenth-century financial system.

Hilton, Mary and Jill Shefrin, eds. [*Educating the Child in Enlightenment Britain: Beliefs, Cultures, Practices*](#) (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009).

Posing a challenge to more traditional approaches to the history of education, this interdisciplinary collection examines the complex web of beliefs and methods by which culture was transmitted to young people in the long eighteenth century. Expanding the definition of education exposes the shaky ground on which some historical assumptions rest. For example, studying conventional pedagogical texts and practices used for girls' home education alongside evidence gleaned from women's diaries and letters suggests domestic settings were the loci for far more rigorous intellectual training than has previously been acknowledged. Contributors cast a wide net, engaging with debates between private and public education, the educational agenda of Hannah More, women schoolteachers, the role of diplomats in educating boys embarked on the Grand Tour, English Jesuit education, eighteenth-century print culture and education in Ireland, the role of the print trades in the use of teaching aids in early nineteenth-century infant school classrooms, and the rhetoric

and reality of children's book use. Taken together, the essays are an inspiring foray into the rich variety of educational activities in Britain, the multitude of cultural and social contexts in which young people were educated, and the extent of the differences between principle and practice throughout the period.

Lightman, Bernard. [*Evolutionary Naturalism in Victorian Britain: The 'Darwinians' and their Critics*](#) (Aldershot: Ashgate Variorum, 2009).

The essays deal with the evolutionary naturalists, especially the biologist Thomas Henry Huxley, the physicist John Tyndall, and the philosopher of evolution, Herbert Spencer. But they look also at those who criticized this influential group of elite intellectuals, including aristocratic spokesman A. J. Balfour, the novelist Samuel Butler, and the popularizer of science Frank Buckland. Focusing on the theme of the limitations of the cultural power of evolutionary naturalism, the volume points to the enduring strength of religion in Britain in the latter half of the 19th century.

Malton, Sara. [*Forgery in Nineteenth-Century Literature and Culture: Fictions of Finance from Dickens to Wilde*](#) (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

In *Forgery in Nineteenth-Century Literature and Culture*, Sara Malton insists that we fully account for the prominence of forgery in the nineteenth-century cultural imagination. Examining a range of works from Dickens to Wilde, she considers how social and legal contexts inform the shifting representation of crime and its varied perpetrators throughout the nineteenth century. Distinct in its historical attentiveness, *Forgery in Nineteenth-Century Literature and Culture* illuminates the breadth of cultural issues to which this "crime of the first magnitude" is linked.

Schmitt, Cannon. [*Darwin and the Memory of the Human: Evolution, Savages, and South America*](#) (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge UP, 2009).

A monograph demonstrating how Darwin and other Victorian naturalists transformed their encounters with the South American continent and its indigenous peoples into influential accounts of biological change, race, and the origins of humanity.

Shefrin, Jill. [*The Dartons Publishers of Educational Aids Pastimes & Juvenile Ephemera 1787 – 1876 A Bibliographical Checklist. Together with a description of the Darton Archive as held by the Cotsen Children's Library, Princeton University Library & A Brief History of Printed Teaching Aids.*](#) (Los Angeles: Cotsen Occasional Press, 2009).

Focusing on the output of a single publishing family, this lavishly illustrated volume brings together for the first time the rich diversity of teaching pastimes and ephemera issued by the print trades in this period. It offers historians of the book, of education, of material culture, and of ephemera a picture of a little explored chapter in the history of publishing for children in England through a comprehensive bibliographic record of the games, pastimes and teaching aids issued by both Darton firms.

Wilson, Keith. ed. [*A Companion to Thomas Hardy*](#) (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009).

The contributors are Tim Armstrong, Penelope Boumelha, Barrie Bullen, Pamela Dalziel, Tim Dolin, Roger Ebbatson, Simon Gatrell, William Greenslade, Margaret Higsonnet,

Michael Irwin, George Levine, Charles Lock, Phillip Mallett, J. Hillis Miller, Michael Millgate, William W. Morgan, Richard Nemesvari, Ralph Pite, Andrew Radford, Stephen Regan, Angelique Richardson, Mary Rimmer, Claire Seymour, Dennis Taylor, Jane Thomas, Glen Wickens Peter Widdowson, Julian Wolfreys, Keith Wilson, Terry Wright.